

Proposed Change to *Senate Rules 6.1.3.A.1* ("Academic Evaluation") – Change to Midterm Grading
Deadline

6.0 Section VI: Student Academic Affairs

6.1.0 ACADEMIC RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

6.1.1 Information about Course Content

Students have the right to expect the course to correspond generally to the description in the official *Bulletin* of the University of Kentucky and the right to be informed in writing (in the course syllabus) at the first class meeting about the nature of the course--the content, the activities to be evaluated, and the grading practice to be followed. Whenever factors such as absences or late papers will be weighed in determining grades, a student shall be informed. All students must be informed in writing of the course content and other matters listed in this rule at no cost to the student. Syllabi may be posted electronically; this must be done by the first class meeting of the semester and the syllabus must remain available there for the entire semester. All students officially enrolled in a course shall, upon request, be provided a copy of the course syllabus free of charge. [US: 2/11/80; SREC: 11/20/87]

6.1.2 Contrary Opinion

A student has the right to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in the classroom without being penalized.

6.1.3 Academic Evaluation [US: 12/5/83]

A. All teachers must inform the undergraduate students in their courses of their current progress based on the criteria in the syllabus before the following dates: [US: 2/14/94; US: 4/10/2000; US: 2/27/2008]

1. the end of the Monday following the end of the ninth week for the fall or spring semester; [US: 3/20/2017]
2. the third day of the fifth week for the eight-week summer term;
3. the second day of the third week for the four-week summer term.

B. Students have the right to receive grades based only upon fair and just evaluation of their performance in a course as measured by the standards announced by their instructor(s) in the written course syllabus at the first class meeting.

C. Students have the right to receive a fair and just academic evaluation of their performance in a program. In addition to the student's overall academic record, evaluation may include the assessment of such activities as research and/or laboratory performance, qualifying examinations, professional board examinations, studio work or performance activities, behavior in professional situations, or interviews to determine continuation in a program. The program faculty and/or relevant administrative officer must inform the student as to which activities will be included in the academic assessment no later than the beginning of the activity to be evaluated.

November 1, 2016

Dear Senate Council,

On behalf of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Education Policy Committee discussed and approved the Midterm Grade Window Petition 7:1:1 on Tuesday, November 1, 2016.

Sincerely,



Christia Brown
Chair, Education Policy Committee

November 1, 2016

Dear Senate Council,

The College of Arts and Sciences Education Policy Committee requests an amendment to Senate Rule 6.1.3A item 1 regarding the reporting of midterm grades.

Currently Senate Rule 6.1.3A item 1 states:

A. All teachers must inform the undergraduate students in their courses of their current progress based on the criteria in the syllabus before the following dates: [US: 2/14/94; US: 4/10/2000; US: 2/27/2008]

1. the end of the ninth week for the fall or spring semester;

We are requesting to amend the senate rule to reflect past practice and propose the following language:

1. the evening of the Monday following the end of the ninth week for the fall or spring semester;

We are requesting this amendment in order to allow faculty adequate time to assess student performance and provide thorough feedback. This extra time is crucial for instructors of large courses that have common hour exams, those courses that are writing intensive, and students that are taking exams through the Disability Resource Center.

In the College of Arts and Sciences 18 courses offered common hour exams in fall 2016 with a total enrollment of 17,011 students. The common hour exam schedule is set to equally split the semester with exams during the fifth, ninth, thirteenth and last week of the semester. Counting the first half week as Week 1 the second exam falls during the week midterm grades are due.

Common hour exams are administered Monday through Thursday in the evenings due to space and manpower. The change in Senate Rule 6.1.3A would allow courses with common hour exams to include the results from two of four examinations for the majority of students. We believe that giving meaningful, appropriate midterm grades is an important tool which can help students and their advisers accurately assess their current progress and contemplate changes to their behavior and/or schedules. Calculating midterm grades based on only one exam would not give struggling students or incoming freshman an accurate understanding of their progress.

Alternately, moving exams to earlier in the semester is not optimal pedagogically or practical for many courses. As mentioned above, the current exam schedule divides the semester into equal segments and moving the exams would not be a reasonable idea from the standpoint of pedagogy. Moving the exams to an entirely different week would constitute a significant change in the structure of the courses.

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There are also logistical considerations. Moving all common hour exams into a one-week period would result in a competition for the scarce resources of exam rooms and proctors.

In the writing-intensive disciplines, it simply takes time to read exams. If an exam is administered in a Thursday or Friday section, that leaves only a matter of hours to assess dozens of exams. In upper-level courses, a mid-term essay can be 10 to 15 pages long. With enrollments of 25-35 students or more, evaluating these papers for all the requisite components is a significant investment of time. Even with an extension of the grading deadline, it still takes a week or so to add comments on all the papers.

Exams administered through the Disability Resource Center sometimes require extra processing time. Extending the deadline will make it more likely that these students will also have their exams included in their midterm grade. According to the most recent report by the DRC students taking math exams comprise 29% of all exams administered by the DRC (1222 last year) and more than twice the number of exams administered for the next largest client.

We recognize that this change would move the deadline to the week of spring break during the spring semester. However, we do not think this change would prevent anyone from submitting their midterm grades by the Friday if they choose to do so.

There are many ideas on how to improve instruction for students, but most of those ideas would require extra resources of time or money. Changing the midterm grade deadline would not require any extra resources, but would still allow us to provide meaningful feedback for students without compromising the integrity of the courses. Moving the due date for the midterm grades should not be an imposition on anyone and will help departments across the university give students better information about their standing in their courses at midterm.

Sincerely,



Christia Brown, Chair
Education Policy Committee

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